

ESOTERIC EXTENSION OF TAROT TO DEVELOP SUPERSENSORY POWERS

LESSON 28

Transcriptions from Ann Davies' Class Lectures

In this lesson we shall take up various aspects of Key 9, The Hermit, and discuss its functions at supersensory levels. One of the interesting things about this particular key is that many aspirants consider The Hermit their favorite key. All of the other keys represent aspects of the Higher Self, too, yet this particular key arouses much devotion. Usually, however, after aspirants have worked with and meditated on the Tarot for some time they come to understand and appreciate all of the keys. In the end they have no favorite; they are all favorites.

Key 9 is the final single digit number in our decimal system. Therefore, by number alone, we realize we are seeing a finished product--but there is more involved than that. What do we mean by a finished product? This key, The Hermit, shows a specific cyclic development from the Fool. We see the Fool in the aspect of having achieved the next height. The Fool starts out on a mountain by day looking toward a higher mountain. The Hermit also stands on a mountain, now at night, after having gone down into the valley of Keys 1 through 8.

This symbolism involves further ideas. For example, we explained to you that Tarot Keys 1 through 7 can be thought of as principles. Keys 8 through 14 are the laws or activities through which these principles work. In the Tarot tableau that you received in your earlier lessons, the key that is above this key is Key 2, the High Priestess. The Hermit wears a blue cap, shaped like the letter Yod. The pure blue color of the cap is one of many indications that the principle of the High Priestess expresses itself in and through this activity.

The principle of the High Priestess is the substance of subconsciousness and, therefore, the basis of memory, since memory resides in the universal subconsciousness. Our consciousnesses are little portions of the universal sea of consciousness. The Hermit's cap indicates that this figure--the particular part of our consciousness called The Hermit--has the ability to draw on complete recollection of its own substance, its own being, its own memory of everything it has been. The Hermit is a picture of experience.

In the Fool you see a youth beginning a new adventure. He has had other adventures as you can see by his clothes. The Life Power goes from creation to creation within Itself. Here we have the aspect of that successive creation that shows a completion, a fulfillment of experience. Hence the figure here is old, whereas the Fool is young.

Experience is indicated also by the fact that the Hermit is looking down while the Fool looks up at the next adventure. The Hermit looks down in the macrocosmic sense, at all the figures that are toiling up the mountain and in the microcosmic sense he looks back at his own personal expression which he guides up the mountain. He casts the guiding light from a six-pointed star, a hexagram.

Esoterically we have been taught by Qabalistic philosophy that all things are created by condensations of star light. We are particular expressions of that star we call our own sun. We are also expressions in various ways of light that pours through us from all of the

other suns or stars. The idea of the personality toiling upward directed by that star--the light of the Higher Self--is based on the teaching that God is light. Almost all who achieve high mystical experiences have the sensation of being permeated with light, seeing light wherever they look. Descriptions of mystical experience always include ideas of radiating light, enveloping light, light over all. We see the symbol of this Light in Tarot Key 9.

We must take up other Qabalistic interpretations of Key 9 to comprehend the real feeling aspect of it to convey to you the inner meaning in a way you have never experienced before. The assignment of the Hebrew letter Yod to Key 9 is important. Each Tarot key has several different attributions; there is the Qabalistic meaning in terms of the Hebrew letter; there are also meanings in terms of the pictorial symbols used and the number of the Hebrew letter as well as the number of the Tarot key.

Every Hebrew letter is also a number. In Hebrew, as in ancient Greek, there are many separate signs for numbers as such. If you wish to write a number you use a letter. For example, Aleph is not only Aleph in terms of the sound but also the number 1. Yet it is assigned to Tarot Key 0.

This double assignment of numbers should not confuse you. There are two distinct lines of interpretation and when they mesh they give the mind definite associations, which can lead to a potent form of meditation that awakens fourth dimensional experiences. This is one reason for using this technique. The mind cannot wander for it is trained to follow the paths of association of the symbols with the numbers and with groups of numbers and symbols. It is done so gradually and evenly that it is far easier than learning the alphabet.

Yod is assigned to the first letter of the divine name Yod-Heh-Vav-Heh. In the Bible this name has been transcribed as Jehovah. This is not the correct pronunciation. The knowledge of the secret name of God is bound up in the understanding of the sounding of letters and knowing their meaning, thus creating vibrational powers which have unbelievable effects upon our consciousness and environment. Because of the potency of these powers, preliminary transmutational steps are necessary. They were at one time the first things taught after entering the mystery schools.

Now these methods are taught openly to advanced students in lessons like these. We are able to teach the more potent elements when you are ready for them. The power of nuclear fusion is nothing compared to the powers of subconsciousness. Indeed, it was subconsciousness that discovered methods of nuclear fusion to begin with. This is only an outer example of the power of consciousness. Consider the energy that radiates from all the suns and stars. What created it? Consciousness. Can your consciousness be separated from the consciousness of the creator? Your feeling of separateness is the basis of error. Our work with Tarot will gradually lead you back to a consciousness of union with the All.

This letter, Yod, is the first holy letter of the divine name, which means "that which is, that which was, and that which will be." That is how it was meant to be understood when it was originally composed and placed in the holy scriptures.

The Hebrew alphabet, which arose from the Chaldean alphabet, has been called the Flame Alphabet. Look at the shape of this letter Yod which is like a little flame. You, too, are a flame of God, a ray of light, a ray of the spiritual sun, as well as a ray of the physical sun. You will realize this more fully one day. The very shape of this letter is meant to tell subconsciousness one thing, and its assignment to the first place in the divine name is meant to tell another thing.

Each Hebrew letter is also connected with a planet or astrological sign. Esoteric astrology is closely involved with Tarot and Qabalah, and no astrologer ever knows astrology completely without comprehension of Tarot and Qabalah. That is why they so often make foolish interpretations; they have only partial truth and therefore are open to misinterpretation. Yod and Key 9 are assigned to the astrological sign Virgo.

Another meaning of Yod is Intelligence of Will. Each Hebrew letter is assigned to a type of consciousness; the type of consciousness involved here is called Intelligence of Will. We have discussed will power as an aspect of Key 7, but here we see it as an activity. Activity is not the principle but something set in motion by a principle! Other meanings are the union of opposites, receptivity, and touch. This lesson and the next will be concerned in part with this sense of touch. We shall discuss clairsentience as a psychic experience and its spiritual correlates as well. Our study will yield a better understanding of all our senses from a fuller understanding of this key.

Key 9 and Yod also symbolize that part of the Tree of Life that is called in Hebrew, Yekhidah, and means the Indivisible One. The Yod, shaped like a flame, is part of every Hebrew letter. Look carefully at the shape of the letter, and you will see that every letter has Yod as a part of it. This symbolism says to subconsciousness that Yod is the ultimate particle, the fundamental building block. This knowledge was held by the Masters before recorded history. Now we are able to make available more and more of what has been completely esoteric. As you continue with these lessons, you will be able to use this knowledge as a part of your day-to-day living.

We consider those of you who have achieved your advanced standing to be ready to undertake part of the work that was in earlier days restricted to members of the Inner School. Through the exercises and practices presented in these advanced courses, you are participating in work extending grade after grade upward in the hierarchy. This work puts you in touch with every other part of the Outer School/Inner School chain.

Key 9 is associated with touch, and with the concept of being in touch with; of connection. The force that is channelled through the hierarchical chain, the whole blessing that comes through to you emanates from the highest level of consciousness that exists in the universe and descends in a continuous flow from level to level to reach you.

It is the One and the One alone under the shadow of whose wing all rest. It is One and One alone that this figure shows. At the same time, the assignment to this key of the Hebrew letter Yod, a part of every other letter, shows that One and One alone is our identity, yours and mine. What other identity could there be? All that ever was or ever will be is one to the sense of touch. Do you see how Qabalistic interpretations connect and

intermesh the letter, the number, the assignments, the sense involved, the principles, and laws connected with a specific key? They become related within our consciousness, forming correlations and pictures which aid our own growth and our own evolution.

Consider then what we mean by the sense of touch. The truest esoteric understanding depends on knowing what the sense of touch is. The meaning of this letter itself is "hand," the open hand, the hand of God, which shapes all things. Here you have the symbolic representation of the hand of God shaping all things, being in touch with all things apparently below. When you look at something with your eyes, do you know what sense you are really using? The sense of touch. Light impinges through your pupils striking your retina, where there are sensory endings. Just as you sense something by touching it, photons of light strike the retina in your eyes, making an impact. This impact sets up vibrations which travel along your nerves to your brain which, in turn, correlates this vibratory information making a mental picture. It is consciousness that sees, but it sees through the sense of touch! Light touched it.

When you hear anything, any sound, a vibration in the air travels to your ears and something is touched. The vibration touches an inner portion of your ear and vibrates along certain nerves into the brain. You heard through the sense of touch. When you taste something, you taste through the little nerves in the taste buds in your tongue through the sense of touch. You smell because air carries molecules of odor up to the nerve endings in the nose; these molecules touch them and you smell the odor. Our senses are but elaborations, specialized developments of the sense of touch.

In the evolution of the physical life, first comes living protoplasm; it has no sense except the sense of touch. It moves through feeling, through touch. It uses that same sense for every perception. Life gradually extends its sense of touch by development of special organs that we call eyes to become more sensitive to distance, and ears, to become more sensitive to sound vibrations. We become increasingly complex. This sense of touch becomes more complex, more discriminating, and all the while remains the sense of touch.

It is interesting that touch is attributed, Qabalistically, to the flame letter Yod, a part of all of the letters. Touch is part of all consciousness. The Hermit, called the One Identity, is the One that shows the light to all below. The importance of understanding the sense of touch stems from the fact that from it all else develops, as all comes from God. Your evolution of consciousness has been the development of ever more complex ways to extend your sense of touch.

When you love someone, what is it you must do? Touch him. If you do not feel a compulsion to touch him, you may be deceiving yourself about loving him because there is a need to touch or embrace the beloved, and there is a need to do things for the beloved, which is another form of contact. The need to be in the presence of and to be able to touch the beloved is compelling beyond all else. I have a highly developed sense of touch, and when I love people I reach out to touch them on the cheek or hand. There are some who do not like being touched; they say, "Don't touch me," and cringe. Many have been hurt in past incarnations or in this one and have become very suspicious of being touched. They do not know that subconsciously they are protecting themselves from hurt; they may think there is

some other reason but most of the time it is because they are afraid to get too close to anyone, having suffered in the past.

We all suffer through the sense of touch and its subsequent repercussions. Though the sense of touch indicates love, when one cringes and says, "Don't touch me," we must not assume that he is not capable of love. Rather, he is afraid to love for fear of disappointment. Or he might feel that the other person is not touching him with a sense of purity. As much as I love humanity, there are some people I would object to having touch me, and this is natural. We all have our affinities and repulsions. We should not permit ourselves to be touched by all and sundry, anymore than we should permit ourselves to be abused or betrayed. This would be masochistic not spiritual. Although we shall say very strong things about the sense of touch, we want to warn you beforehand not to jump to conclusions about people who may be fearful and may not wish to touch or be touched by others. There are many reasons for this reluctance.

What happens when we touch? We reach out with our hands to touch; lips also love to touch. You know how we love to let our lips touch the cheeks of a baby. The entire skin has a most extraordinary grouping of nerve endings related to the sense of touch.

In certain areas we are predominantly sensitive to touch. You will remember that union with opposites is one of the symbolic meanings of this letter and this key. Think for a moment in what manner the sense of touch is expressed in its highest intensity. It is through the union with the opposite sex. Mystics who have higher experiences find themselves at such a loss to describe their raptures and ecstasies that they have to express themselves in erotic imagery, descriptions of the love of the beloved. This is all related to the sense of touch. Whatever level we consider, we must remember that when we feel something, it is an inward development of consciousness from our sense of touch.

When we experience touch, either in its outer sense or its inner sense, in terms of feeling, we experience the same thing. You will find that people with more sensitive outer touch are those who have the capacity to express strong emotions. Without strong emotions, you are limited in your operation for achievement of liberation, of union with God. We must learn to direct these emotions. We want them strong but directed in very special ways.

As an advanced student you must begin to pay much more attention to the outer things you touch. This will help you to attain a deeper feeling and understanding of the principles that this key, The Hermit, represents. As we work more with our sense of touch in special ways, we shall find that our ability to experience the emotions of rapturous unity with the Higher Self will be heightened. Finally we will achieve the many simultaneous levels of unity. Everything we touch can be nothing but an aspect of God, therefore, we must train ourselves to realize this. Through the High Priestess (symbolizing subconsciousness) we must store these heightened perceptions in our memories--in that evolving knowledge which will finally bring a burst of remembrance of our True and One Identity.

When we touch anything, we must train ourselves to remember that we are touching some aspect of God. We shall not have any rapture in touching a glass unless, as we touch

the glass, we think of the miracle of consciousness which has taken the vibration of its own substance to fashion an article. As we touch it, we feel its smoothness and hardness. We are all attention, and it is the giving of attention that helps to bring all things about. We give attention to the glass, in terms not only of its touch but of its significance and purpose.

When we touch the petal of a flower, we must reflect that this is a living creature. How often do we touch a flower with the realization that we are the hand of God, experiencing the unique texture of the flower? When we smell it we are touching the flower with our nostrils. When we see it, we are touching it with our eyes. Whatever we do, we are touching an aspect of God. We must train ourselves to this realization. It is easy if we have a beloved pet. When you touch the pet, you say, "Isn't this a miraculous creature!" If you are looking at it, you are touching it with your eyes. There is a delight. Think more of the delight.

Stop seeing and being blind; hearing and being deaf; touching and being dead. It is time truly to use our sense of touch, and this Tarot key will help us do it.

There are inner qualities that develop as a result of working properly with the sense of touch. Some aspirants have a psychic sense of touch without having worked and developed the outer sense of touch. This can create difficulties because inner psychic development needs balance with its opposite or the unbalanced energy will give problems. Problems, it is true, grow us, and in the long run they are good for us; but do you not think it is time we were guided by the lantern, by the light of the star, so that we do not stumble and bruise ourselves so much?

This week direct your consciousness to the sense of touch. Become aware of the subtle differences in the feel and texture of all the articles you handle. Go for a walk. Let the breeze caress your face--walk barefooted in the grass. As you work toward developing an ever more discriminating sense of touch, remember that the Hermit is with you, guiding you toward the height upon which he stands.